CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM NEWS...

August 1999

Integrated Storage Investigation

An important work effort at CALFED over the next several months is the ISI – Integrated Storage Investigation – an evaluation of storage options and operations.

The CALFED Preferred Program Alternative relies on four strategies to achieve its goals and objectives. Through the Water Management Strategy, CALFED seeks to achieve a reliable water supply for all beneficial uses of water. This strategy relies on an assortment of tools to fulfill its goals, including storage.

Through the ISI, CALFED is evaluating various types of storage, the appropriate mix of storage options, and operational strategies. Types of storage being evaluated are surface storage, groundwater storage, conjunctive use programs and power facilities re-operation. The ISI will also evaluate the potential to remove fish migration barriers.

An important first milestone of the ISI will be reached by April 2000, when the final CALFED Program EIS/EIR will be released. By that time, conclusions will be drawn from the ongoing ISI studies to better define the role of storage in the preferred alternative. The ISI is expected to continue into the implementation phase of the CALFED Program to provide integration between project-specific feasibility studies and environmental documentation processes.

Participation and comments from stakeholders and the general public are key elements in each of these tasks. ("ISI" continued on page 3.)

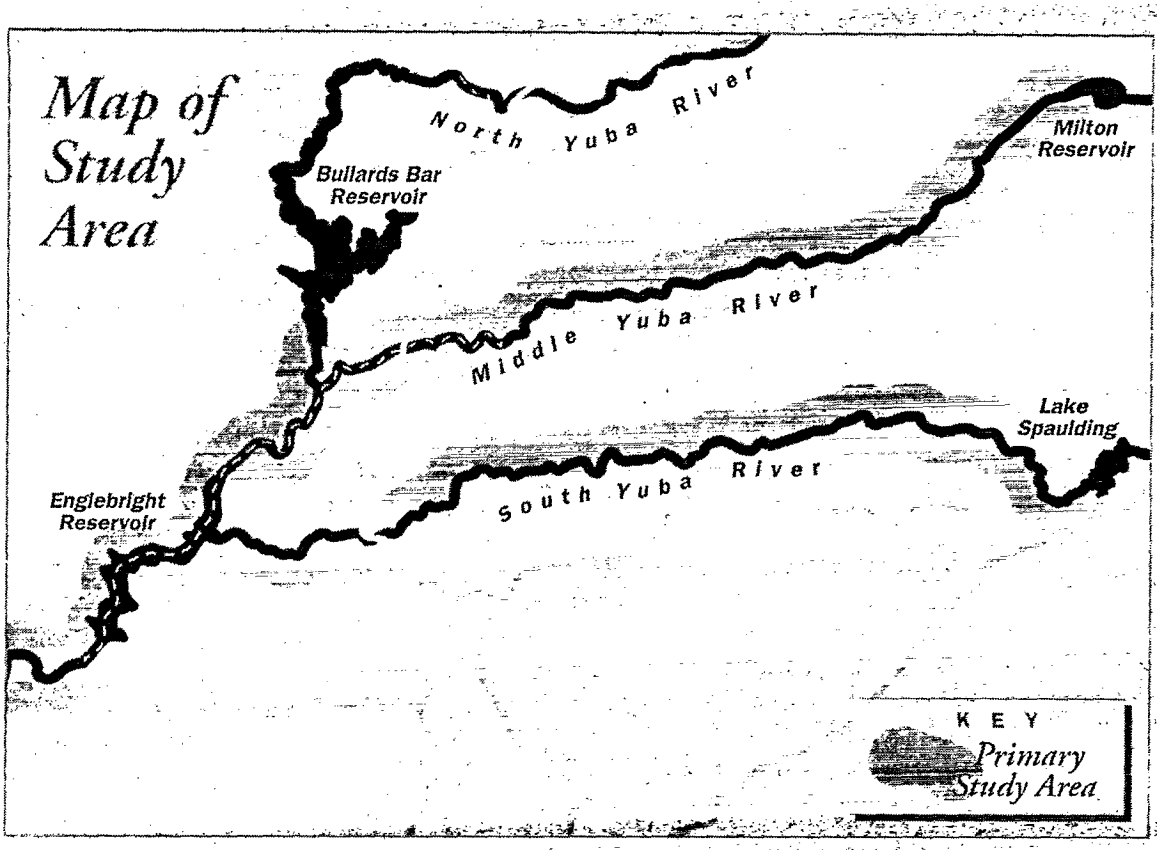
Upper Yuba River Studies Program

The CALFED Program is considering modifying or removing some barriers to fish passage, such as small dams, in order to restore fish access to critical spawning habitat. Evaluation of these barriers will weigh the potential ecosystem benefits and alternative ways to address potential water supply reliability, flood control, and power impacts associated with removal or modification of small dams. Interested stakeholders will participate in the evaluation process. This evaluation is part of the ISI and is being coordinated with ongoing studies of the Upper Yuba River above Englebright Dam.

The Upper Yuba River Studies Program is examining the feasibility of introducing anadromous fish species, primarily spring-run chinook salmon and steelhead trout, to the Upper Yuba River.

Steelhead and spring-run chinook salmon (listed as threatened species under the federal and state Endangered Species Acts, respectively) require cool streams found in headwater areas high in a watershed. Biological data indicates that the Yuba River above Englebright Dam historically had habitat that supported steelhead and spring-run chinook. The Upper Yuba River appears to be a good candidate to meet CALFED's objectives to develop comprehensive plans to restore ecological processes, habitats, and species on rivers and tributaries to the Bay-Delta.

However, the local community has expressed deep concern over the CALFED proposal, which (Continued on page 2.)



emphasized modifications to Englebright. CALFED subsequently revised the plan to emphasize restoration of the steelhead and spring-run salmon and examine various options to achieve this goal.

Local stakeholders were invited to participate with CALFED in developing the study issues required to make decisions about restoring the fishery to the Upper Yuba River. This Upper Yuba River Workgroup, comprised of business and property owners, water supply and power, environmental interests, and State and Federal resource agencies, met several times. They developed a set of issues and recommended feasibility studies to guide a comprehensive decision-making process.

Major Agreements & Key Issues

The workgroup reached agreement on the study's purpose, its phases, definition of the study area, the study process, and the specific parameters for each key issue area identified in the stakeholder groups. The following is a summary of the major agreements reached.

The Workgroup agreed that the study purpose is to determine if introduction of wild chinook salmon and steelhead to the Upper Yuba River watershed is biologically, environmentally, and socio-economically feasible over the long-term.

The Upper Yuba River Studies Program expects to conclude its evaluations in about 24 months. The effort is divided into three phases.

Phase 1 - Stakeholder workgroups develop study issues. Completion date: September 1999.

Phase 2 – Conduct feasibility study. Complete within 18 months.

Phase 3 – Evaluate study results and stakeholder recommendations. Estimated completion within six months of Phase 2 completion.

Of the many issues identified for the Upper Yuba Studies Program, six were key. The Workgroup worked very hard to identify factors that needed evaluation in the technical studies in order to assess and recommend potential next steps to CALFED. The following are the key issues. A complete list of the Workgroup recommendations is available from CALFED, and is posted on the Upper Yuba River Studies page of the CALFED web site.

- **Upstream Habitat for Salmon and Steelhead**: Field investigations are necessary to determine if existing and potential habitat and fish passage conditions above Englebright Dam are suitable for spring-run chinook salmon and steelhead trout.

- **Condition of Habitat Downstream of Englebright Dam**: Fish habitat conditions below Englebright Dam contribute to maintaining healthy populations of fall-run chinook salmon and other anadromous fish.

- **Public Health and Safety (Flood Control)**: Programs that maintain or increase flood protection while improving environmental conditions are favored.

- **Economic Effects**: The potential adverse and beneficial economic results must be evaluated. These include property values, business values, power generation, and recreation.

- **Sediment Control and Water Quality**: The quantity of sediment captured by Englebright Dam needs to be accurately determined. The presence or absence of contaminants such as mercury in the sediments needs to be analyzed.

- **Water Supply Effects**: Water management in the system needs to be analyzed to determine if ecological improvements can be obtained without compromising or providing additional water supplies.

Upper Yuba River Public Meetings

The Workgroup will share their recommendations and get community comment at five public meetings in September. All meetings will be from 7-10 p.m.

September 7, Olivehurst
Olivehurst Community Center
4979 Olivehurst Ave./Youth Center Drive

September 8, Rocklin
The Finnish Temperance Hall
4090 Rocklin Road

September 9, Nevada City
The Miners Foundry
325 Spring Street

September 14, Oakland Edward R Roybal Auditorium & Conference Center
1301 Clay Street

September 16, Yuba City
Yuba Sutter Fair
Franklin Hall, 442 Franklin Ave

(Continued from page 1)

ISI Tasks for 1999-2000

- Assess the effects of storage – existing storage and re-operation of these facilities, as well as new storage – on river and stream environments.

- Evaluate the potential for re-operation of hydroelectric facilities in the Sacramento River Basin, and the potential impacts on fish and wildlife, recreation and power production.

- Evaluate potential groundwater conjunctive use programs in the Central Valley and South Coast regions.

- Identify and prioritize fish barriers for possible modification or removal. This task will be conducted in parallel with the Upper Yuba River Studies Program.

- Continue to refine the Economic Evaluation of Water Management Alternatives, which will provide economic information about the relative effectiveness of water management tools.

- Develop a comprehensive plan, incorporating the work on riverine processes, hydroelectric facility re-operation, and groundwater conjunctive use potential. This task will evaluate various combinations of water management tools to meet CALFED Program objectives.

CALFED BAY-DELTA PROGRAM

For More Information about Upper Yuba River

Please fill out the form below to be added to the Upper Yuba Studies River Program mailing list and receive advance notification of upcoming public meetings and continued information.

Name _____

Affiliation _____

Mailing Address _____

_____

City, State, Zip Code _____

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The mission of the CALFED Bay-Delta Program is to develop a long-term comprehensive plan that will restore ecological health and improve water management for beneficial uses of the Bay-Delta system.

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